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ABSTRACT

This bulletin presents a summary and analysis of national and state juvenile arrest data for 1999. Data come from the FBI's annual "Crime in the United States" report, which offers the estimated number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies. The 1999 murder rate was the lowest since 1966. Of the nearly 1,800 juveniles murdered in 1999, 33 percent were under 5 years of age, 66 percent were male, 51 percent were white, and 52 percent were killed with firearms. The juvenile share of violent crime decreased in 1999. Twenty-seven percent of juvenile arrests were of females. Juvenile arrests disproportionately involved minorities. The chance of being murdered varied with age, gender, and race. Juvenile arrests for violence in 1999 were the lowest in a decade. Juvenile arrests for property crimes declined substantially in recent years. Juvenile arrests for curfew and loitering violations increased 113 percent between 1990-99. Arrests of juveniles accounted for 12 percent of all violent crimes cleared by arrest in 1999. Most juveniles arrested were referred to court. (SM)

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ED 449 291

John J. Wilson, Acting Administrator
December 2000
JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN

Juvenile Arrests 1999

Howard N. Snyder

In 1999, law enforcement agencies in the United States made an estimated 2.5 million arrests of persons under age 18.* According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), juveniles accounted for 17% of all arrests and 16% of all violent crime arrests in 1999. The substantial growth in juvenile violent crime arrests that began in the late 1980's peaked in 1994. In 1999, for the fifth consecutive year, the rate of juvenile arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses—murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—declined. Specifically, between 1994 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for Violent Crime Index offenses fell 36%. As a result, the juvenile violent crime arrest rate in 1999 was the lowest in the decade. The juvenile murder arrest rate fell 68% from its peak in 1993 to 1999, when it reached its lowest level since the 1960's.

These findings are derived from data reported annually by local law enforcement agencies across the country to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Based on these data, the FBI prepares its annual *Crime in the United States* report, which summarizes crimes known to the police and arrests made during the reporting calendar year. This information is used to characterize the extent and nature of juvenile crime that comes to the attention of the justice system. Other recent findings from the UCR Program include the following:

- Of the nearly 1,800 juveniles murdered in 1999, 33% were under 5 years of age, 66% were male, 51% were white, and 52% were killed with a firearm.
- Juveniles were involved in 9% of murder arrests, 14% of aggravated assault arrests, 33% of burglary arrests, 25% of robbery arrests, and 24% of weapons arrests in 1999.
- Juvenile murder arrests increased substantially between 1987 and 1993. In the peak year of 1993, there were about 3,800 juvenile arrests for murder. Between 1993 and 1999, juvenile arrests for murder declined, with the number of arrests in 1999 (1,400) about one-third that in 1993.
- Juvenile arrest rates for burglary have declined substantially since 1980.
- Juveniles were involved in 13% of all drug abuse violation arrests in 1999. Between 1990 and 1999, juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations increased 132%.
- Juvenile arrests for curfew and loitering violations increased 113% between 1990 and 1999. In 1999, 28% of curfew arrests involved juveniles under age 15 and 30% involved females.
- In 1999, 59% of arrests for running away from home involved females and 39% involved juveniles under age 15.
- Arrests of juveniles accounted for 12% of all violent crimes cleared by arrest in 1999—specifically, 6% of murders, 12% of forcible rapes, 15% of robberies, and 12% of aggravated assaults.

* Throughout this Bulletin, persons under age 18 are referred to as juveniles. See Notes on page 12.

From the Administrator

After peaking in 1994, juvenile violent crime arrests, which had increased substantially since the late 1980's, declined dramatically. The juvenile arrest rate for violent crime in 1999 was 36% below its peak in 1994, and from 1993 to 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for murder decreased a remarkable 68%—to its lowest level since the 1960's. The number of juvenile arrests have declined in every violent crime category despite an 8% growth in the juvenile population from 1993 to 1999.

Such encouraging news, however, should not result in complacency or lead us to reduce our efforts to combat violent juvenile crime. Rather, to further reduce the levels of juvenile violence and other juvenile offending, we should continue and expand our work in States and communities across this country to prevent and control delinquency and strengthen the juvenile justice system.

Juvenile Arrests 1999 provides a summary and analysis of national and State juvenile arrest data presented in the FBI report *Crime in the United States 1999*. It offers a road map of where we have been, while identifying trends that can help us to tailor responses and target resources more effectively in order to support the development of healthy, law-abiding youth.

John J. Wilson
Acting Administrator

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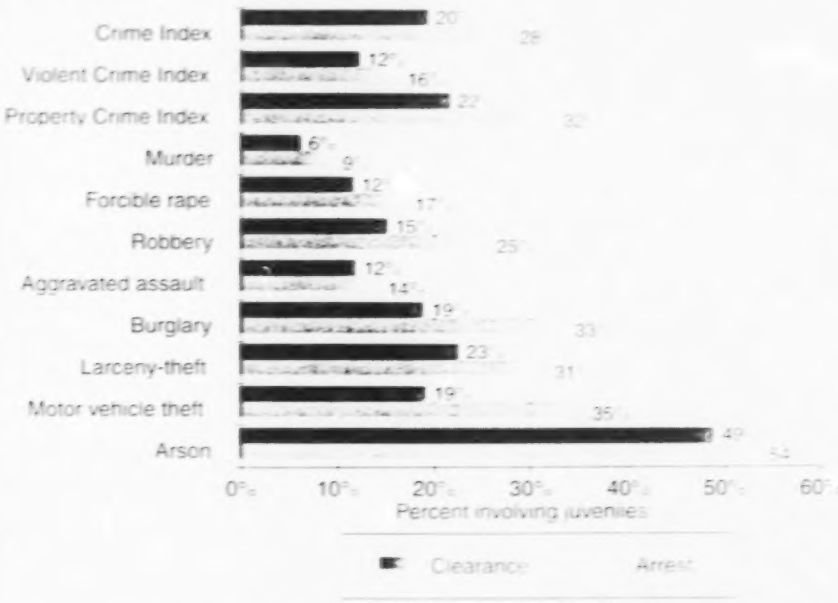
What do arrest statistics count?

To interpret the material in this Bulletin properly, the reader must have a clear understanding of what these statistics count. The arrest statistics report the number of arrests made by law enforcement agencies in a particular year—not the number of individuals arrested, nor the number of crimes committed. The number of arrests is not equivalent to the number of people arrested, because an unknown number of individuals are arrested more than once in the year. Nor do arrest statistics represent counts of crimes committed by arrested individuals, because a series of crimes committed by one individual may culminate in a single arrest, or a single crime may result in the arrest of more than one person. This latter situation, where many arrests result from one crime, is relatively common in juvenile law-violating behavior because juveniles are more likely than adults to commit crimes in groups. This is the primary reason why arrest statistics should not be used to indicate the relative proportion of crime committed by juveniles and adults. Arrest statistics are most appropriately a measure of flow into the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Arrest statistics also have limitations for measuring the volume of arrests for a particular offense. Under the UCR Program, the FBI requires law enforcement agencies to classify an arrest by the most serious offense charged in that arrest. For example, the arrest of a youth charged with aggravated assault and possession of a controlled substance would be reported to the FBI as an arrest for aggravated assault. Therefore, when arrest statistics show that law enforcement agencies made an estimated 198,400 arrests of young people for drug abuse violations in 1999, it means that a drug abuse violation was the most serious charge in these 198,400 arrests. An unknown number of additional arrests in 1999 included a drug charge as a lesser offense.

The juvenile proportion of arrests exceeded the juvenile proportion of crimes cleared by arrest in each offense category, reflecting the fact that juveniles are more likely to commit crimes in groups and are more likely to be arrested than are adults



Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), tables 26 and 38.

What do clearance statistics count?

Clearance statistics measure the proportion of reported crimes that were resolved by an arrest or other, exceptional means (e.g., death of the offender, unwillingness of the victim to cooperate). A single arrest may result in many clearances. For example, one arrest could clear 40 burglaries if the person was charged with committing all 40 of these crimes. Or multiple arrests may result in a single clearance if the crime was committed by a group of offenders. For those interested in juvenile justice issues, the FBI also reports information on the proportion of clearances that were cleared by the arrest of persons under age 18. This statistic is a better indicator of the proportion of crime committed by this age group than is the arrest proportion, although there are some concerns that even the clearance statistic overestimates the juvenile proportion of crimes.

For example, the FBI reports that persons under age 18 accounted for 25% of all robbery arrests but only 15% of all robberies that were cleared in 1999. If it can be assumed that offender characteristics of cleared robberies are similar to those of robberies that were not cleared, then it would be appropriate to conclude that persons under age 18 were responsible for 15% of all robberies in 1999. However, the offender characteristics of cleared and nonCleared robberies may differ for a number of reasons. If, for example, juvenile robbers were more easily apprehended than adult robbers, the proportion of robberies cleared by the arrest of persons under age 18 would overestimate the juvenile responsibility for all robberies. To add to the difficulty in interpreting clearance statistics, the FBI's reporting guidelines require the clearance to be tied to the oldest offender in the group if more than one person is arrested for a crime.

In summary, while the interpretation of reported clearance proportions is not straightforward, these data are the closest measure generally available of the proportion of crime known to law enforcement that is attributed to persons under age 18.

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The 1999 murder rate was the lowest since 1966

The primary focus of each *Crime in the United States* report is the estimated number of crimes reported to law enforcement agencies. A large portion of most crimes are never reported to law enforcement. Murder, however, is one crime that is nearly always reported and, therefore, is the crime for which the FBI data are most complete.

There were 15,533 murders reported to law enforcement agencies in 1999, or 5.7 murders for every 100,000 U.S. inhabitants. One would have to go back to 1969 to find a lower annual number of murder victims and to 1966 to find a lower annual murder rate. In the 40-year period from 1960 to 1999, the number of murders in the United States peaked in 1993 (24,530 murders, yielding a murder rate of 9.5), and the murder rate was at its highest level in 1980 (23,040 murders, yielding a murder rate of 10.2).

Eighty-eight percent of murder victims in 1999 (or about 13,700 victims) were 18 years of age or older. The other nearly 1,800 murder victims were under the age of 18. This figure is substantially below that of the peak year of 1993, when almost 2,900 juveniles were murdered. The last year in which fewer than 1,800 juveniles were murdered was 1987.

Of all juveniles murdered in 1999, about 600 (or 33%) were under age 5. Half of these murdered children were female and 56% were white. Almost 1,000 murdered juveniles (or 55%) were ages 13 to 17. Forty-six percent of these murdered teenagers were white and 20% were female.

In 1999, 65% of all murder victims were killed with a firearm. Adults were more likely to be killed with a firearm (68%) than were juveniles (52%). However, the involvement of a firearm depended greatly on the age of the juvenile victim. Whereas 17% of murdered juveniles under age 13 were killed with a firearm in 1999, 81% of murdered juveniles age 13 or older were killed with a firearm. The most common method of murdering children under the age of 5 was by physical assault; in 47% of such murders, the offenders' only weapons were their hands and/or feet.

The number of juvenile arrests in 1999—2.5 million—was 9% below the 1995 level, and juvenile arrests for violent crime dropped 23%

Most Serious Offense	1999 Estimated Number of Juvenile Arrests	Percent of Total Juvenile Arrests		Percent Change		
		Female	Under Age 15	1990–99	1995–99	1998–99
Total	**2,468,800**	**27%**	**32%**	**11%**	**–9%**	**–8%**
Crime Index total	645,400	27	38	–20	–24	–10
Violent Crime Index	103,900	17	33	–5	–23	–8
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	1,400	8	12	–55	–56	–31
Forcible rape	5,000	2	39	–13	–11	–9
Robbery	28,000	9	26	–16	–39	–14
Aggravated assault	69,600	22	36	4	–13	–5
Property Crime Index	541,500	29	39	–23	–24	–11
Burglary	101,000	11	38	–32	–23	–15
Larceny-theft	380,500	36	40	–15	–23	–10
Motor vehicle theft	50,800	16	26	–49	–35	–5
Arson	9,200	11	67	9	–19	1
Nonindex						
Other assaults	237,300	30	43	48	2	–3
Forgery and counterfeiting	7,000	37	13	–7	–16	–5
Fraud	13,100	29	22	10	16	11
Embezzlement	1,700	48	6	63	47	10
Stolen property (buying, receiving, possessing)	29,100	13	27	–37	–38	–17
Vandalism	119,500	12	44	–9	–20	–9
Weapons (carrying, possessing, etc.)	42,500	9	32	–4	–27	–7
Prostitution and commercialized vice	1,300	54	14	–25	–10	–16
Sex offenses (except forcible rape and prostitution)	16,600	8	51	0	9	1
Drug abuse violations	198,400	14	16	132	1	–4
Gambling	1,200	4	11	3	–49	–22
Offenses against the family and children	10,100	38	35	143	16	–13
Driving under the influence	23,000	17	3	0	36	–1
Liquor law violations	165,700	31	10	9	31	–3
Drunkenness	21,700	20	13	–20	–5	–9
Disorderly conduct	176,200	28	37	46	–3	–9
Vagrancy	2,400	19	20	–44	–35	–22
All other offenses (except traffic)	434,100	25	28	42	3	–8
Suspicion	1,900	22	29	–62	–18	17
Curfew and loitering	170,000	30	28	113	9	–14
Runaways	150,700	59	39	–14	–28	–12

- In 1999, there were an estimated 1,400 juvenile arrests for murder. Between 1995 and 1999, juvenile arrests for murder declined 56%.
- Females accounted for 22% of juvenile arrests for aggravated assault and 30% of arrests for simple (i.e., other) assaults. Females represented more than half (59%) of all juveniles arrested for running away from home.
- In the 10-year period between 1990 and 1999, there were substantial declines in the number of juvenile arrests for murder (55%), burglary (32%), and motor vehicle theft (49%) and major increases in arrests for simple (other) assaults (48%), drug abuse violations (132%), and curfew violations (113%).

Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), tables 29 (revised), 32, 34, 36, 38, and 40. Arrest estimates were developed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice.

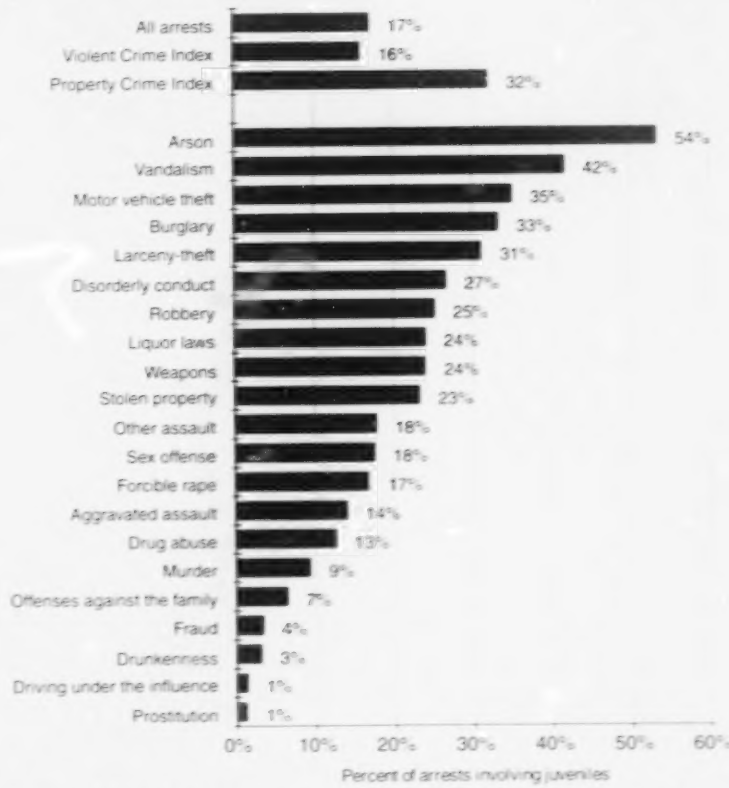
The juvenile share of the crime problem decreased in 1999

The relative responsibility of juveniles for crime is hard to determine. Research has shown that juvenile crimes are at times more likely to be cleared by law enforcement than are crimes by adults. Therefore, the proportion of crimes that are cleared by the arrest of juveniles is likely to be an upper estimate of the juvenile responsibility for crime.

The clearance data in the *Crime in the United States* series show that the proportion of violent crimes attributed to juveniles has declined in recent years. The proportion of violent crimes cleared by juvenile arrests grew from 9% in the late 1980's to 14.2% in 1994 and then declined to 12.4% in 1999.

The proportion of murders cleared by juvenile arrests peaked in 1994 at 10.5% then dropped to 6.3% in 1999—the lowest level since 1987 but still above the 4.6% level of the mid-1980's. The juvenile proportion of cleared forcible rapes peaked in 1995 (15.1%) and then fell, with the 1999 proportion (11.8%) near the lowest level in the decade but still above the levels of the late 1980's (9%). Similarly, the juvenile proportion of robbery clearances in 1999 (15.3%) was below its peak in 1995 (20.2%) but above the levels of the late 1980's (10%), and the juvenile proportion of aggravated assault clearances in 1999 (12.0%) was below its peak in 1994 (13.1%) but still above the levels of the late 1980's (8%). The proportion of Property Crime Index offenses cleared by juvenile arrests in 1999 (21.8%) was near the lowest level in the decade.

In 1999, juveniles were involved in fewer than 1 in 6 arrests for a violent crime, 1 in 3 arrests for a property offense, and 1 in 4 arrests for a weapons law violation



Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), table 38.

In 1999, 27% of juvenile arrests were arrests of females

Law enforcement agencies made 670,800 arrests of females under age 18 in 1999. Between 1990 and 1999, arrests of juvenile females generally increased more (or decreased less) than male arrests in most offense categories.

Most Serious Offense	Percent Change in Juvenile Arrests 1990–99	
	Female	Male
Robbery	–11%	–17%
Aggravated assault	57	–5
Burglary	–8	–34
Larceny-theft	6	–24
Motor vehicle theft	–24	–52
Simple assault	93	35
Vandalism	28	–13
Weapons	44	–7
Drug abuse violations	190	124
Liquor law violations	24	4
Curfew and loitering	139	103
Runaways	–12	–18

Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999*, table 33.

Juvenile arrests disproportionately involved minorities

The racial composition of the juvenile population in 1999 was 79% white, 15% black, and 5% other races, with most Hispanics classified as white. In contrast, 57% of juvenile arrests for violent crimes involved white youth and 41% involved black youth. To a lesser extent, black youth were also overrepresented in juvenile property crime arrests, with 27% of these arrests involving black youth and 69% involving white youth.

Most Serious Offense	Black Proportion of Juvenile Arrests in 1999
Murder	49%
Forcible rape	35
Robbery	54
Aggravated assault	35
Burglary	24
Larceny-theft	26
Motor vehicle theft	39
Weapons	30
Drug abuse violations	29
Curfew and loitering	25
Runaways	18

Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999*, table 43.

The chance of being murdered varies with age, gender, and race

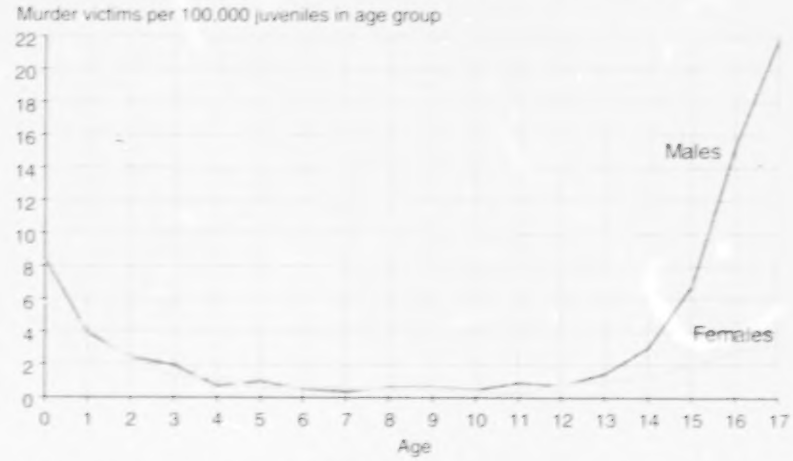
In *Crime in the United States 1999*, the FBI documented the probability of being a murder victim in 1997, showing how these probabilities varied by age, gender, and race. For example, the study found that 7.12 of every 100,000 children who had not reached their first birthday were murdered in the United States in 1997. Within this age group, the probability of being murdered was higher for males (8.36) than females (5.82) and far greater for blacks (16.72) than for whites (5.19) or other races (5.26).

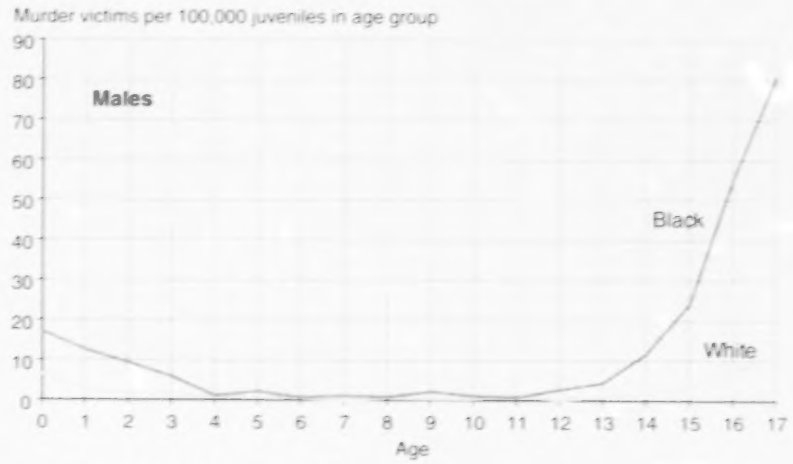
Overall, juveniles with the lowest risk of becoming murder victims were those ages 4 through 12, with probabilities ranging from 0.42 to 0.94. The oldest juveniles were at most risk. For every 100,000 persons age 17 in the U.S. population in 1997, 12.87 were murdered. In 1997, persons age 20 had the highest risk of being murdered (20.24). In 1978, the risk was highest for persons age 28. This change from 1978 to 1997 reflects a general shift during this period toward younger age groups as peak ages for murder victimization.

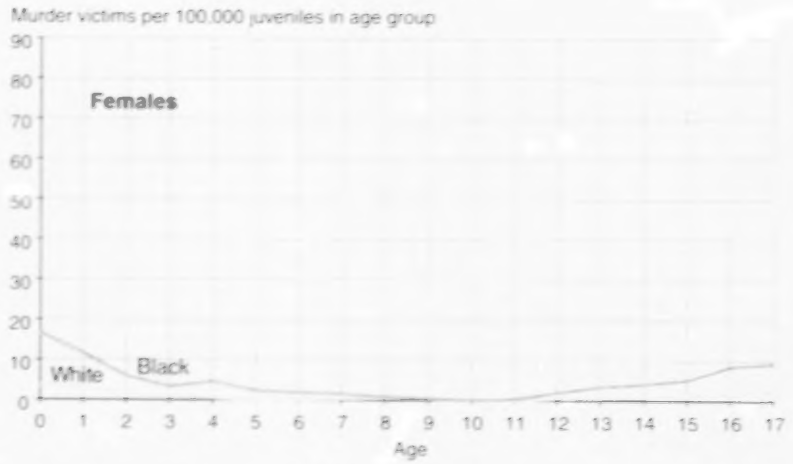
For both genders, the murder risk was relatively high during the first year of life, generally declined during the grade school years, and increased during the teenage years. However, whereas the murder risk for males was more than twice as great at age 17 as during the first year of life (21.88 versus 8.36), the increasing risk for females during the teenage years never rose to the risk levels of the first year of life. In 1997, a 17-year-old female's risk of being a murder victim was about half that of a baby girl (3.20 versus 5.82). In fact, the FBI analyses show that the age at which a female in 1997 was at highest risk of being murdered was her first year of life. The second most risky year was age 24 (5.57).

Overall, the murder risk for black juveniles in 1997 was about triple that of white juveniles. This disparity in murder risk was lowest for youth ages 10 and 11, where the risks for whites and blacks were essentially equal. However, the rate for black infants was more than triple that for white infants (16.72 versus 5.19). Most disparate among juveniles was the murder risk for 17-year-old blacks, which was seven times the rate for whites (45.96 versus 6.43).

In 1997, the risk of being murdered was similar for boys and girls in their preteen years for both whites and blacks, but the risk was much higher for boys in their teenage years—especially for blacks

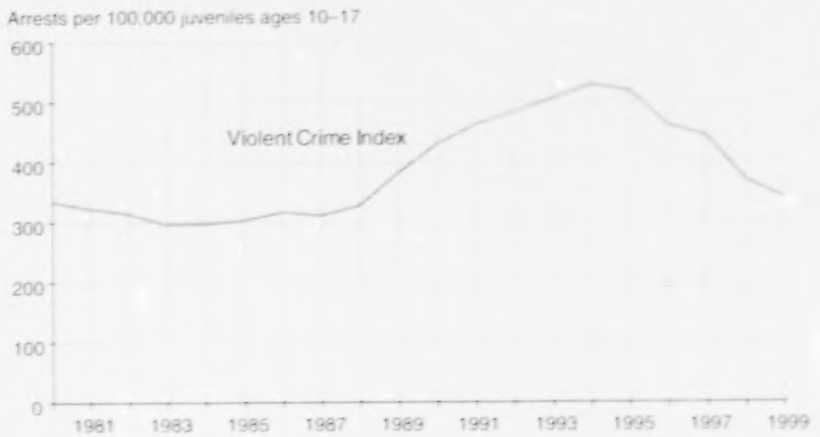






Data source: *Crime in the United States 1999*, appendix A (revised).

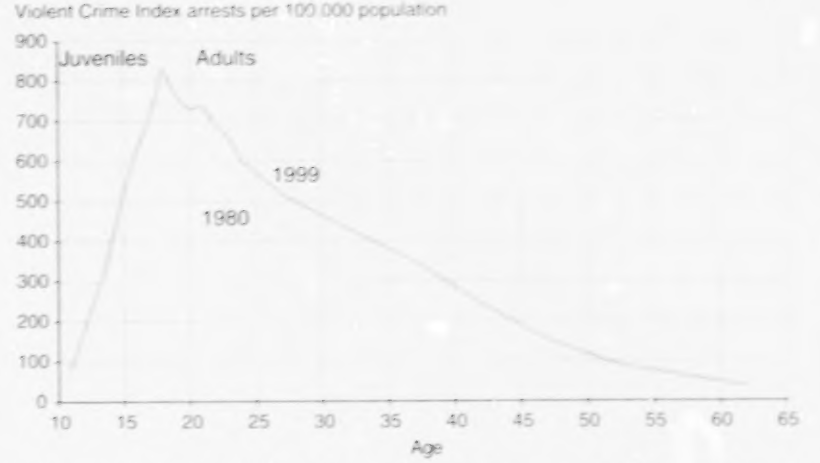
The juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate in 1999 was at its lowest level since 1988—36% below the peak year of 1994



- The growth in the juvenile violent crime arrest rate from 1988 to 1994 was virtually erased by 1999, with the 1999 rate just 4% above the 1988 level.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

Violent Crime Index arrest rates were higher in 1999 than in 1980 for all adult age groups—for juveniles, 1999 rates were nearly at or below the 1980 rates



- Between 1980 and 1999, the Violent Crime Index arrest rates for persons ages 15–17 decreased about 2%. In comparison, the rates increased for persons age 18 and older, with the largest increases being for persons between ages 30 and 45. More specifically, the rate increased 11% for persons ages 18–24, 20% for persons ages 25–29, 42% for persons ages 30–34, 53% for persons ages 35–39, and 43% for persons ages 40–44. Even the arrest rate for persons ages 60–64 increased by 14%.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

Juvenile arrests for violence in 1999 were the lowest in a decade

The FBI assesses trends in the volume of violent crimes by monitoring four offenses that are consistently reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide and are pervasive in all geographical areas of the country. These four crimes—murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—together form the Violent Crime Index.

After years of relative stability in the number of juvenile Violent Crime Index arrests, the increase in these arrests between 1988 and 1994 focused national attention on the problem of juvenile violence. After peaking in 1994, these arrests dropped each year from 1995 through 1999. The number of juvenile arrests in 1999 was the lowest since 1988 for all Violent Crime Index offenses combined and the lowest since 1984 for murder, 1983 for forcible rape, and 1991 for aggravated assault. The number of juvenile arrests for robbery in 1999 was lower than in any year since at least the early 1970's.

Between 1995 and 1999, the decline in the number of violent crime arrests was greater for juveniles than adults for most violent crime offenses.

Most Serious Offense	Percent Change in Arrests 1995–99	
	Juvenile	Adult
Violent Crime Index	–23%	–12%
Murder	–56	–25
Forcible rape	–11	–14
Robbery	–39	–19
Aggravated assault	–13	–10

Few juveniles were arrested for violent crime

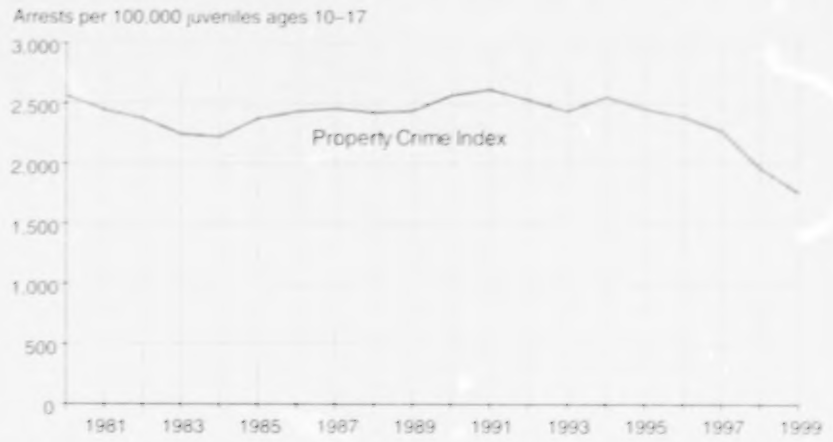
There were 339 arrests for Violent Crime Index offenses for every 100,000 youth between 10 and 17 years of age. If each of these arrests involved a different juvenile (which is unlikely), then no more than 1 in every 290 persons ages 10 through 17 was arrested for a Violent Crime Index offense in 1999. This means that about one-third of 1% of juveniles ages 10–17 were arrested for a violent crime in 1999.

Juvenile arrests for property crimes declined substantially in recent years

As with violent crime, the FBI assesses trends in the volume of property crimes by monitoring four offenses that are consistently reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide and are pervasive in all geographical areas of the country. These four crimes, which form the Property Crime Index, are burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

For the period from 1988 through 1994, during which juvenile violent crime arrests increased substantially, juvenile property crime arrest rates remained relatively constant. After this long period of relative stability, juvenile property crime arrests began to fall. Between 1994 and 1999, the juvenile Property Crime Index arrest rate dropped nearly 30%, to its lowest level since at least the 1960's. Juvenile burglary arrests have been declining for a generation. The number of juvenile arrests for burglary in 1999 (101,000) was just one-third the number of such arrests in 1975 (291,300).

The juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses in 1999 was at its lowest level since at least 1980



- In stark contrast to the substantial fluctuations in juvenile violent crime arrest rates between 1980 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for Property Crime Index offenses changed relatively little between 1980 and 1997. Between 1997 and 1999, however, the rate has dropped 23%.

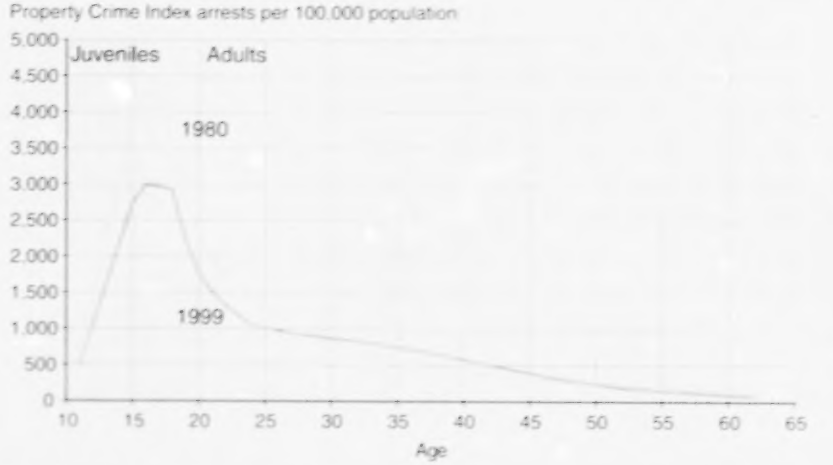
Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

Most arrested juveniles were referred to court

In most States, some persons under age 18 are, due to their age or by statutory exclusion, under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system. For arrested persons under age 18 *and* under the original jurisdiction of their State's juvenile justice system, the FBI's UCR Program monitors what happens as a result of the arrest. This is the only instance in the UCR Program in which the statistics on arrests coincide with State variations in the legal definition of a juvenile.

In 1999, 23% of arrests involving youth eligible in their State for processing in the juvenile justice system were handled within law enforcement agencies. Of all juvenile arrests, 69% were referred to juvenile court and 6% were referred directly to criminal court. The others were referred to a welfare agency or to another police agency. The proportion of arrests sent to juvenile court has increased gradually from 1990 to 1999 (64% to 69%). In 1999, the proportion of juvenile arrests sent to juvenile court was similar in cities (69%), suburban areas (68%), and rural counties (69%).

The Property Crime Index arrest rate in 1999 was below the rate in 1980 for all persons age 25 or younger



- The only age groups with higher Property Crime Index arrest rates in 1999 than in 1990 were persons between the ages of 30 and 45.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

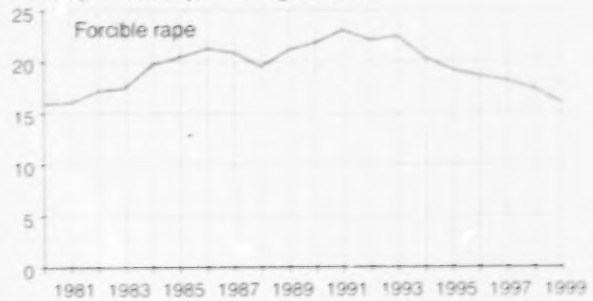
Of all Violent Crime Index offenses, the juvenile arrest rate for murder showed both the greatest increase and the greatest decline between 1980 and 1999

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

Murder

- In 1988, the juvenile arrest rate for murder rose above the rates experienced in previous years.
- From the base year of 1987 to its peak in 1993, the juvenile arrest rate for murder more than doubled.
- The consistently sharp declines in the juvenile murder arrest rate from 1993 through 1999 have reduced the rate to 68% below the 1993 level and to its lowest level in a generation, negating all of the increases that stimulated so many changes in juvenile justice policy in the 1990's.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Forcible Rape

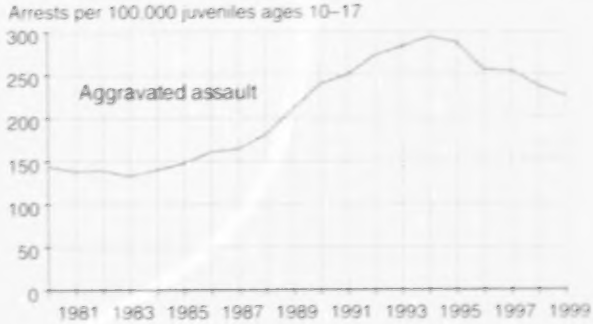
- The juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape generally increased from 1980 through 1991—44% over this period.
- The decline in the juvenile arrest rate for forcible rape between 1991 and 1999 returned the 1999 rate to that of 1980.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17

Robbery

- The juvenile arrest rate for robbery declined by 30% between 1980 and 1988.
- The juvenile arrest rate for robbery increased 70% between the low year of 1988 and 1994, reaching a level nearly 20% above the 1980 rate.
- Following sharp declines since 1995, the juvenile arrest rate for robbery in 1999 was at its lowest level since at least 1980—53% below the peak year of 1994 and 20% below the low year of 1988.

Arrests per 100,000 juveniles ages 10–17



Aggravated Assault

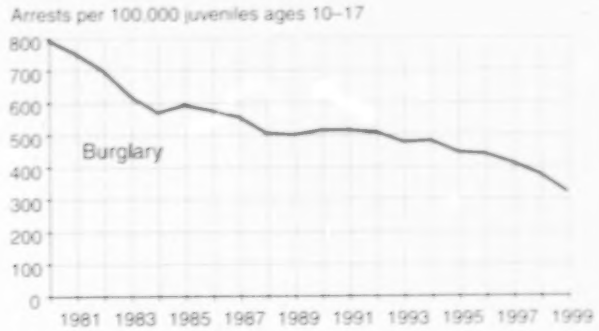
- Outpacing the large increases in robbery arrests, the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault more than doubled between 1983 and 1994.
- Unlike the juvenile arrest rate for robbery, which fell to its lowest level in a generation in 1999, the decline in the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault was more moderate—only 24% below the 1994 peak.
- In 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault was 69% above its 1983 low point.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

Offenses within the Property Crime Index span a wide range of severity and have had very different juvenile arrest trends

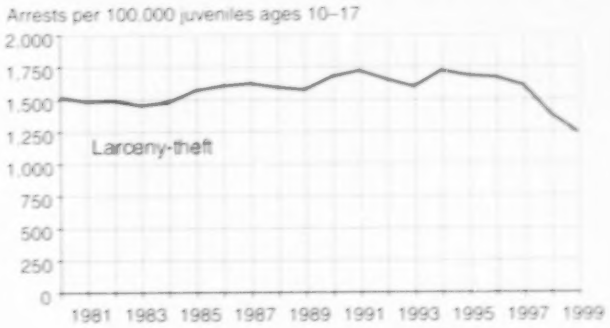
Burglary

- The juvenile arrest rate for burglary declined consistently and substantially (60%) between 1980 and 1999.
- The juvenile arrest rate in 1999 (319) was less than half of that in 1980 (794).
- The number of burglary arrests declined for both juveniles and adults between 1990 and 1999, with adult arrests down 34% and juvenile arrests down 32%.



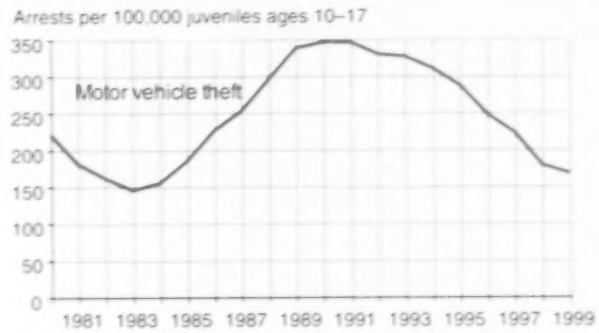
Larceny-Theft

- In comparison with the juvenile arrest rate for other Property Crime Index offenses, the rate for larceny-theft remained relatively constant between 1980 and 1997.
- The juvenile arrest rate for larceny-theft in 1999 was the lowest since at least 1980.
- Over the 10 years between 1990 and 1999, while juvenile arrests for larceny-theft declined 15%, adult arrests dropped 25%.



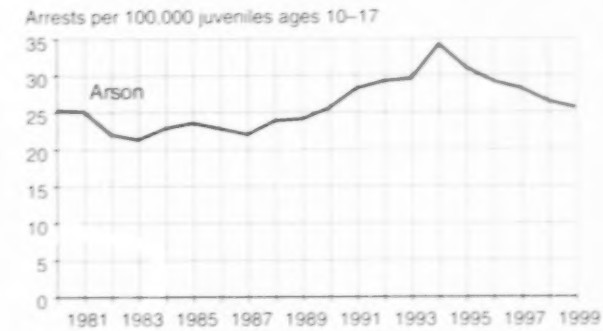
Motor Vehicle Theft

- The juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft soared between 1983 and 1990, up nearly 140%.
- Between 1990 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for motor vehicle theft was cut in half, so that the rate in 1999 was at its lowest level since 1984.
- Between 1990 and 1999, the number of arrests for motor vehicle theft fell more for juveniles (49%) than for adults (29%).



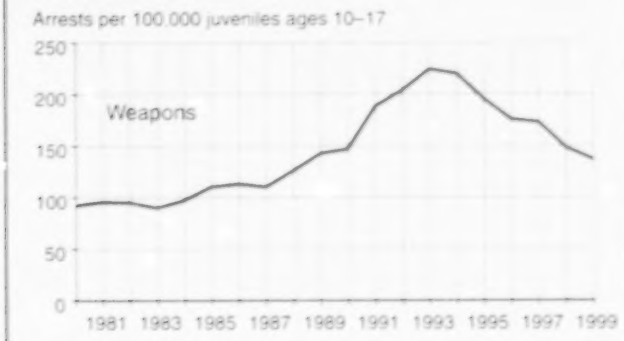
Arson

- Compared with juvenile arrest rates for the other three Property Crime Index offenses, the rate for arson is relatively low. The following comparison places the magnitude of juvenile arson arrests in perspective: for every 1 juvenile arrested for murder in 1999, 5 were arrested for arson, 36 were arrested for motor vehicle theft, and 266 were arrested for larceny-theft.
- The juvenile arrest rate for arson in 1990 was greater than in any year in the 1980's. The rate grew until it reached a peak in 1994. Between 1994 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for arson declined 25%, returning to the 1990 level.



Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

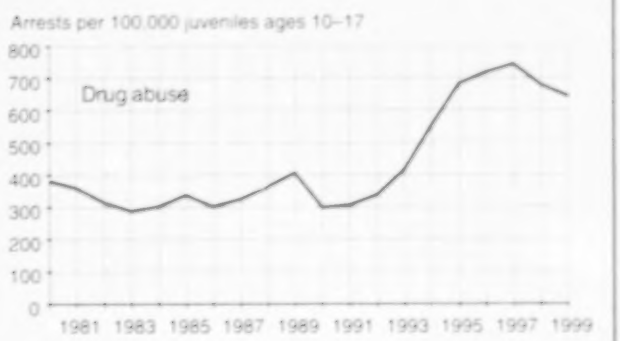
Trends in juvenile arrest rates for weapons law violations and for murder were similar between 1980 and 1999



- The juvenile arrest rate for weapons law violations more than doubled between 1987 and 1993, as did the juvenile arrest rate for murder.
- Between 1993 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rates for both murder and weapons law violations declined substantially, with the juvenile murder arrest rate falling 68% and the weapons arrest rate dropping 39%.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

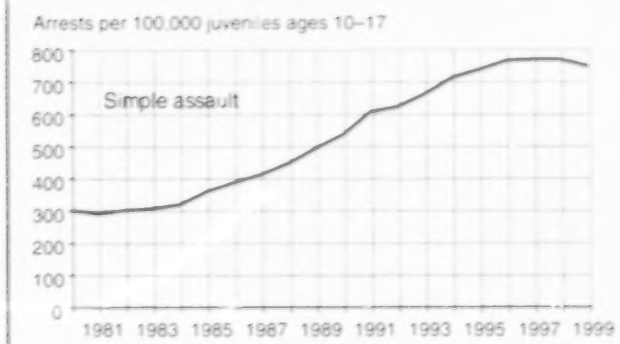
The juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations in 1999 was twice the average rate of the 1980's



- After staying relatively constant, the juvenile arrest rate for drug abuse violations broke out of the range in 1994, peaked in 1997, then dropped 13% by 1999.
- The increase in the number of drug abuse violation arrests between 1990 and 1999 was far greater for juveniles (132%) than for adults (29%) and greater for female juveniles (190%) than for male juveniles (124%).

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

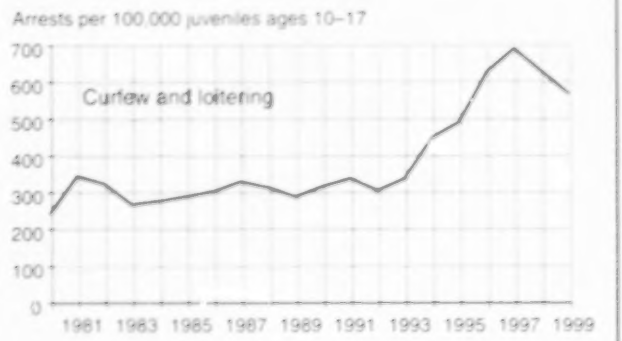
In 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault dropped slightly for the first time since 1981



- Like juvenile arrest rate trends for aggravated assault, the simple assault rate increased consistently between the early 1980's and the mid-1990's.
- Unlike aggravated assault, however, the simple assault arrest rate has remained essentially constant since 1996.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

After years of stability, the juvenile arrest rate for curfew and loitering violations more than doubled between 1993 and 1997



- Between 1997 and 1999, the juvenile arrest rate for curfew and loitering violations dropped 17%.
- Of all juveniles arrested for curfew and loitering violations in 1999, 72% were white, 30% were female, and 28% were under age 15.

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *[See data source note on page 12 for detail.]*

State variations in juvenile arrest rates may reflect differences in juvenile law-violating behavior, police behavior, and/or community standards

State	Reporting Coverage	1999 Juvenile Arrest Rate* Violent Crime Index	Property Crime Index	Drug Abuse	Alcohol Violation†
Total United States	69%‡	366	1,844	668	626
Alabama	93	148	932	270	238
Alaska	90	279	2,302	493	615
Arizona	92	316	2,334	943	1,240
Arkansas	95	228	1,573	400	460
California	100	498	1,643	633	379
Colorado	62	300	2,874	839	1,602
Connecticut	95	339	1,445	738	204
Delaware	100	766	2,002	654	535
District of Columbia	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Florida	100	672	2,713	946	175
Georgia	31	188	1,603	514	460
Hawaii	88	220	2,076	513	289
Idaho	86	196	2,546	516	1,650
Illinois	23	1,058	2,637	2,841	34
Indiana	58	393	1,705	514	888
Iowa	81	267	1,998	450	1,337
Kansas	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Kentucky	11	516	2,291	1,251	528
Louisiana	75	461	2,381	710	298
Maine	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Maryland	60	304	1,982	947	519
Massachusetts	78	454	734	433	363
Michigan	82	195	1,108	326	693
Minnesota	85	275	2,381	763	1,832
Mississippi	40	189	2,075	770	566
Missouri	58%	312	2,273	703	432
Montana	49	315	3,496	126	1,616
Nebraska	92	119	2,716	688	1,640
Nevada	97	288	2,526	839	938
New Hampshire	39	124	1,262	664	1,509
New Jersey	96	409	1,417	942	458
New Mexico	57	357	1,973	812	896
New York	32	336	1,745	719	264
North Carolina	88	334	1,717	534	323
North Dakota	74	92	2,154	333	2,890
Ohio	53	248	1,509	414	684
Oklahoma	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Oregon	94	203	2,531	490	1,502
Pennsylvania	77	422	1,425	532	811
Rhode Island	100	246	1,570	667	219
South Carolina	23	400	2,113	1,060	764
South Dakota	71	167	2,375	772	2,796
Tennessee	51	250	1,804	591	388
Texas	90	235	1,682	628	544
Utah	68	253	2,675	579	1,424
Vermont	81	60	796	345	1,569
Virginia	68	191	1,469	453	489
Washington	74	335	3,073	544	1,159
West Virginia	52	95	999	220	472
Wisconsin	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Wyoming	98	146	2,455	879	3,644

* Throughout this Bulletin, juvenile arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of arrests of persons ages 10–17 by the number of persons ages 10–17 in the population. In this table only, arrest rate is defined as the number of arrests of persons under age 18 for every 100,000 persons ages 10–17. Juvenile arrests (arrests of youth under age 18) reported at the State level in *Crime in the United States* cannot be disaggregated into more detailed age categories so that the arrest of persons under age 10 can be excluded in the rate calculation. Therefore, there is a slight inconsistency in this table between the age range for the arrests (birth through age 17) and the age range for the population (ages 10–17) that are the basis of a State's juvenile arrest rates. This inconsistency is slight because just 2% of all juvenile arrests involved youth under age 10. This inconsistency is preferable to the distortion of arrest rates that would be introduced were the population base for the arrest rate to incorporate the large volume of children under age 10 in a State's population.

† Alcohol violations include liquor law violations, drunkenness, and driving under the influence.

‡ The reporting coverage for the total United States in this table (69%) includes all States reporting arrests of persons under age 18. This is greater than the coverage in the rest of this Bulletin (63%) because Florida was able to provide arrest counts of persons under age 18 but was not able to provide the age detail required to support most other presentations in *Crime in the United States 1999*.

NA = *Crime in the United States 1999* reported no arrest counts for this State.

Interpretation cautions: Arrest rates are calculated by dividing the number of youth arrests made in the year by the number of youth living in reporting jurisdictions. While juvenile arrest rates in part reflect juvenile behavior, many other factors can affect the size of these rates. For example, jurisdictions that arrest a relatively large number of nonresident juveniles would have higher arrest rates than jurisdictions where resident youth behave in an identical manner. Therefore, jurisdictions that are vacation destinations or regional centers for economic activity may have arrest rates that reflect more than the behavior of their resident youth. Other factors that influence the magnitude of arrest rates in a given area include the attitudes of its citizens toward crime, the policies of the jurisdiction's law enforcement agencies, and the policies of other components of the justice system. **Consequently, comparisons of juvenile arrest rates across States, while informative, should be made with caution.** In most States, not all law enforcement agencies report their arrest data to the FBI. Rates for these States are necessarily based on partial information. If the reporting law enforcement agencies in these States are not representative of the entire State, then the rates will be biased. **Therefore, reported arrest rates for States with less than complete reporting coverage may not be accurate.**

Data source: Analysis of arrest data from the FBI's *Crime in the United States 1999* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000), tables 5 and 69, and population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census' *Estimates of the Population of States by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990 to 1999* [machine-readable data file available online, released August 30, 2000].

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Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

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Notes

In this Bulletin, "juvenile" refers to persons under age 18. This definition is at odds with the legal definition of juveniles in 1999 in 13 States—10 States where all 17-year-olds are defined as adults and 3 States where all 16- and 17-year-olds are defined as adults.

FBI arrest data in this Bulletin are counts of arrests detailed by age of arrestee and offense categories from all law enforcement agencies that reported complete data for the calendar year. The proportion of the U.S. population covered by these reporting agencies ranged from 63% to 94% between 1980 and 1999, with the 1999 coverage being 63%.

Estimates of the number of persons in each age group in the reporting agencies' resident populations assume that the resident population age profiles are like the Nation's. Reporting agencies' total populations were multiplied by the U.S. Bureau of the Census' most current estimate of the proportion of the U.S. population for each age group.

Data source note

Analysis of arrest data from unpublished FBI reports for 1980 through 1997 and from *Crime in the United States* reports for 1998 and 1999 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999 and 2000, respectively); population data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1980 to 1999* [machine-readable data files available online, released April 11, 2000].

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Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

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